



THE

KNIGHT



No. 1 Official Publication of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association (L.N.A.) June-July 1978 50¢

NEW LI. PATTERN

WELCOME

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

In early 1978, a series of letters appeared in World Coin News from several persons who shared their interest in collecting Lithuanian money. As the letters progressed, it became apparent that there was indeed a genuine interest and the need to form some type of organization as to where the Lithuanian collectors would have an avenue to share their numismatic knowledge with other collectors. We therefore bring you **THE KNIGHT**. Our purpose:

1. To bring together collectors of Lithuanian money, whether coins or currency, ancient or modern, in a common organization.
2. To provide an avenue to share numismatic knowledge with one another.
3. To inform members and educate them in detailed information heretofore unavailable in the English language, especially in the field of numismatics.
4. To advance the knowledge of the history and peoples of the Baltic States, particularly in the field of numismatics.

With those goals in mind, we launch the Lithuanian Numismatic Association. **WELCOME!!**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. How do you grade modern Lith. coins? Vytis looks worn, yet my coin is supposed to be AU.

A. This is a tough question which we hope our readers will write in and comment on their own views. Briefly, a common characteristic of the coins is the flat surface of Vytis. Upon first appearance, the knight is worn, but this is not the case. The first signs of wear will appear on the upper leg, the helmet, and on the foot-strap area. However, many coins were not fully struck, and the fine details may be missing, though the coin is UNC. It appears that the grading will be along the lines of grading a U.S. Standing Liberty Quarter--difficult! The editor has seen specimens offered by dealers as XF which upon close examination were UNC or AU, just because Vytis appeared flat.

Q. What is the inscription that appears on the edge of some of the 2 Litu patterns of 1938?

Con't on pg. 2.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

With this first issue, it seemed only fitting that our book in review for this month would be **THE MOST** standard reference book on modern Lithuanian coins ever written:

"Nepriklausomos Lietuvos Pinigai"
By Jonas K. Karys. New York, 1953
255 pgs, illustrations.

This book, written in the Lith. language contains complete information and photos of coins, currency, personalities, history, etc., of independent Lithuania.

The author, who is still living, was director of the mint in Kaunas.

The book starts with WWI "Ost" money and continues in great detail on the formation of the litas as Lithuania's currency.

A wealth of numismatic information abounds, with numerous charts, diagrams, values, descriptions, and photos of both coins and currency.

This book is highly recommended for any collector of modern Lith. money. Much heretofore unknown numismatic information, tidbits, are to be found by the reader.

It is the hope of the editors of The Knight that portions of this book can be translated into the English language and

Con't on pg. 2.

YOUR ARTICLE HERE

A regular feature we hope to carry in each issue of The Knight is one or more articles written by our fellow Lithuanian collectors.

Each collector has his own specialty, and the special knowledge he has is what our readers would like to know about!

In this issue is a survey sheet which we'd like you to fill out and send in. This will help us determine the interest in various subject topics that readers want to know about.

Here is a list of suggested topics which you might like to write an article about. We'll be looking for **YOUR** letter!

Uniface issues of 1925
History of the Mint in Kaunas
Patterns
1938 10 Litu Currency
Ostmarks and Ostrubles
Flower designs on coins
Coins of: Vytautas, Jogaila, etc.
UNRRA 1946 "Camp Money"

GRAŠIS

Grašis or grašiai is the Lithuanian term for "grosch" or "groschen" coins minted during the 1500's.

VYTIS PROMINENT ON COINS

The most recurring symbol on Lith. coins is its national coat of arms, Vytis, a white knight on a field of red. The word Vytis meaning "knight" comes from the word "vyti" meaning "to chase after."

The mounted horseman was first used on coins in the late 14th cent. and was adopted by Lith. Grand Duke Vytautas the Great. It became well known and is found on seals, engravings, flags, maps, and coins of Li. Vytis is to Lithuania as the eagle is to the U.S. or Poland.

The knight is pictured with a double cross and a shield, which is attached to his upper left arm and shoulder. The shield with a double cross was created by Grand Duke Jogaila in preparation for his marriage to Poland's Queen Jadwiga, which took place in 1386. The shield symbolizes endurance, power, and unity.

During Lithuania's fight for independence, the double cross became the highest military award and was called the "cross of Vytis."

The use of Vytis on Lithuanian's modern 20th century coins provides a link of past and present, and to remind the people of their rich heritage.

SUBWAY?

Coin dealers Fred Sweeney of Kansas City, Mo. ad featured in the April issue of The Numismatist proclaims: "Our Want List Service Probably Can't Help you if you Collect: Lithuanian Subway Tokens..."

WANT ADS:

As a free service to our members, this space is being reserved for you to list items which you have either for sale, or which you need. We do ask that you limit the subject to Baltic-related items.

WANTED: Germ."Ostmark" note 5 Marks Pi #R-130. Preferably in XF-UNC. Dated Kovno April 4, 1918. Frank Passic 900 S. Eaton St. Albion Mi 49224

WANTED: A complete set of regular Lith. coinage (Y-1-14), preferably in AU-UNC. Make offer. Victor Dulkis Rt #1 Maryland, New York 12116

WANTED: The following banknotes in Fine or better: Pick # 6, 15, 17, 19, 20, and 28 (Lithuania). Make offer. Robert Douchis Box 250 Columbia, Maryland 21045

DID YOU KNOW...

Did you know that one of the U.S.' most popular coins was designed by a Lithuanian? Yes--Victor David Brenner, designer of the Lincoln Cent, was born in Siauliai, Lith. in June of 1871. He came to the U.S. in 1890 and became a famous sculptor and produced many medals, in addition to the Lincoln Cent. His father, who was an engraver and die maker, happened to be a numismatist! Brenner died in 1924.

BOOKS IN REVIEW from page 1.

2.

serialized in future issues of The Knight. Anyone who can fluently translate from Lithuanian into English accurately is asked to contact the L.N.A.

While this book has been out of print for some time now, a few copies are still available for sale for \$7.00 plus \$1 postage & handling from the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, 4012 Archer Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60632. The museum also has several other numismatic books for sale.

COLUMNS

In addition to Vytis, another symbol widely used by Lithuania is the "columns of Gediminas", or "column gate." The C. is a figure of seven straight lines representing a gate in the fortified wall of a castle or city. This symbol originated about 1323 in the city of Vilnius and can be found stamped on silver bar money. It also appears on the coat of arms of the port city of Klaipėda.

As is with the case of Vytis, the columns appear on many medieval Lith. coins, as well as numerous modern ones. It is most prominently displayed on the reverse of the 1938 10 Litų 20th anniversary comm.

The columns appear directly under Vytis on coins of 1925 and opposite Vytis on the state banner of Lithuania.

In recent times it has become a symbol of freedom and is forbidden in occupied-Lithuania today.

Y numbers (Y-1, Y-2, etc.) are those assigned by R.S. Yeoman to coins and appear in the "telephone book" Krause Mishler Standard Catalog of World Coins. Lithuanian coins are numbered by this system.

MINTS

Bronze cent pieces of 1925 were made at the King's Norton Metal Works in Birmingham, England. The 1925 silver issues were made at the Royal Mint in London. All 1936 and 1938 pattern pieces were made at the Brussels Mint in Belgium. Regular 1936-38 coins were struck in Kaunas, Lith. by Spindulys, Ltd., although the dies and planchets were prepared by the Brussels Mint.

Q's AND A's Cont....

A. The inscription reads Vertically (!) and not horizontally as other inscribed coins: • LIETUVA • LIETUVA • LIETUVA

Q. I have some paper 10 centu, 50 centu, and 1 doleris dated 1946. One side is in Lithuanian and the other in English. What is it?

A. These are WWII displaced person "camp money" of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. They are individually serially numbered and stamped: "UNRRA Dalins, Scheinfeld" The market value for a set of these in UNC is around \$30, XF-\$20.

Anyone with more detailed information about these such as issuance, use, history, etc., is asked to write the L.N.A.

To our knowledge, there is no information about these notes in print.

Your questions about Lithuanian money are most welcome. Feel free to write.

BEWARE OF COUNTERFEITS

The May 2 World Coin News carried in their "Junk Box Finds" a supposedly authentic silver denar of Lith. Jagiello. These are counterfeits which were made several years ago, in large quantity. The May 16 WCN corrected this in Readers Soap box.

The editor of The Knight has personally seen these offered for sale. They are easily identifiable by the highly raised "beads" and by a "worn" spot in the center of the Columns.

An unsuspecting collector might not be aware of this, however, so "spread the word."

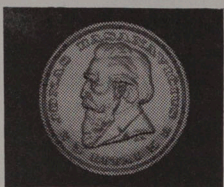
UNIFACE TEST STRIKES LISTED

In 1925, the first Lithuanian coins were minted at the Royal Mint in London and the King's Norton Metal Works in Birmingham, England. A limited number of each of the various Y1-5 cent bronze pieces were struck uniface. Many have a proof-like surface. They appear on the market occasionally, but are not currently listed in the Standard Catalog. Market value is around \$100 each. The uniface test strikes known to date are:

- Y-1 1 Centas Obverse and Reverse
- Y-2 5 Centai Obverse and Reverse
- Y-3 10 Centu Obverse only
- Y-4 20 Centu Reverse only
- Y-5 50 Centu Obverse only

If you have a uniface test strike other than those listed here, write the L.N.A. for confirmation and we will list it in a future issue.

COIN OF THE MONTH: 1936 5 LITAI Y-12



Each month we hope to feature a numismatic item, whether coin, currency, or whatever, and bring you details about its history.

This month our featured coin is the 1936 5 Litai (Y-12).

Mintage: 2,750,000

Size: 27mm

Weight: 9 gr.

Metallic Content: .750 silver
.250 copper

Edge: Inscribed

Origin: Spindulys, Ltd., in Kaunas, Lith.
Planchets from Brussels mint

Obverse: Bust of Jonas Basanavičius. Top legend, "JONAS BASANAVIČIUS." On the bottom, "5 LITAI 5." Designers initials, "J.Z." appear under bust. Patterns are known with "J. Zikaras."

Reverse: In the center, Vytis. At the bottom, the date "1936."

Edge: Inscribed: "TAUTOS • GEROVĖ • TAVO • GEROVĖ" which is translated, "The welfare of the nation is your welfare." This inscription appears in random positions and can read from either obverse or reverse positions. Plain edge patterns are known, and were minted in Brussels.

The obverse features a bust of Lith. patriarch Jonas Basanavičius. Born in Ožkabliai in 1851, Basanavičius became a well known physician and ethnologist.

In 1880, to escape Russian domination, he set up practice in Bulgaria. There he published a newspaper called the *Auštra*, which was printed in the forbidden Lith. language. Its aim was to promote national consciousness and strengthen the desire for freedom.

In addition, Basanavičius wrote many journals containing ethnological and linguistical material about Lithuania. In one of these he proved that the Lithuanian people were direct descendants of the Thracio-Phrygians of the Indo-European family.

With the relaxation of restrictions by Russia in 1905, Basanavičius returned to Lithuania and in 1907 became the first president of the Lithuanian Scientific Society and editor of its publication, "*Lietuvių Tauta*." (Lithuanian nation).

In late 1917 he was elected to the Taryba (Council) of Lithuania. Being its oldest member, he was the first signer of the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence, which was proclaimed in Vilnius on Feb 16, 1918. Basanavičius continued to write articles, and died in Vilnius on Feb 16, 1927.

The 1936 5 Litai is probably the most frequently offered Lithuanian coin by coin dealers. A sample of recent prices: UNC: \$19, AU: \$14, XF: \$10, VF: \$7.50.

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the 20th anniversary of Lithuanian independence. 1978 marks the 40th anniversary of the issuance of this coin, and the 60th anniversary of the Lithuanian declaration of independence.

Only 1980,000 of this Y-14 were minted, making it by far the rarest of regular Lithuanian coins. Many of these were melted down by the Russians a few years later, making this coin highly prized today. Current market value is around \$50 for UNC, a bargain considering the very low mintage and actual availability. A "sleeper" indeed!

The obverse features a bust of Lithuanian president Antanas Smetona, and the reverse displays a large Columns, a figure of seven lines, Lithuania's symbol of freedom.

ADDRESSES

As a service to our readers here are a few organizations or publications which you may be interested in.

World Coin News
A weekly coin newspaper devoted entirely to world coinage and paper money. Subscription is \$8 per yr. Write: WCN Krause publications, Iola, Wisconsin 54945. Note: Lith. coins often are offered for sale by various dealers in this paper.

Baltic Enterprises
P.O. Box 8241 Boston, MA. 02114. Deals with "knick-knacks" bumper stickers, decals, amber jewelry, T-shirts, dolls, etc. concerning Lithuania, also other Baltic countries.

Bridges Newsletter
P.O. Box 9061 Boston, MA. 02114. A monthly newsletter reporting news about Lith. personalities across the U.S., political developments, social activities, and news from Lithuania. Subscriptions are \$3 yr.

Bendruomene, Lith-Amer Community of the U.S.
704 Benson St. Philadelphia, PA. 19111. Committed to promoting Lith. culture in the U.S. and organizing local Lith. groups. Publishes literature about Lithuania.

Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture
4012 Archer Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60632. Has several numismatic books for sale, also some "knick-knacks."

If you know of other organizations that should be listed, let us know.

A.N.A. LIBRARY BOOKS

Below is a listing of some of the books on Lithuanian money available by the American Numismatic Association mail library, for its members. Library catalog numbers are included. Write: Librarian, A.N.A. Box 2366 Colorado Springs, Co 80901

JM 97 Platbarzdīs, Aleksan-
P5 drs. Coins and Notes of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuan.
Stockholm, Numismatiska
Bokforlaget, 1968 123 pgs.

JM97 Karys, Jonas Senoves K3 Lietuviu Pinigai (ancient, medieval Lith. money)
Bridgeport, Conn. 1959. 396 pgs. Written in Lithuanian.

UF 40 Karys, Jonas. Neprik- K3 lausomos Lietuvos Pinigai. New York, 1953. In Lithuanian, with English summary at the end. 255 pgs. (our book of the month)

Rackus, Dr. Alexander. Cyclopedia of Lithuanian Numismatics Chicago, 1965. 344 pgs., illustrated. (Library # not listed, but they do have this book)

UF 40 Berzins, Edgars.
B4 Paper money of the Baltic States, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania. Dunbar, W. Va. 1961. 14 pgs.

Pi numbers (Pi-1, Pi-2, etc.) are those catalog numbers assigned to currency, including Lithuanian, by Albert Pick, author of Standard Catalog of World Paper Money, Krause Publications.

These numbers should be used in identifying Lith. paper currency.

Lithuanian notes are listed under "Lithuania" and the "Ost" money, used until 1922, lists under "Germany".

EDITORIAL PAGE

4.

It hardly seems possible that in a few short months, of conversing with each other by letter, that the Lithuanian Numismatic Association has become a reality--but here we are!!

The editors of this paper happen to be of Lithuanian ancestry, and are active in our local coin clubs. We met by letter through a series of letters published in World Coin News in Jan-March of 1978.

Being collectors, we started sharing information with each other and with each letter realized that there was a vast wealth of information unknown to the numismatic public, let alone to Lithuanian collectors.

We also realized that there were probably other collectors of Baltic coins and currency that would very much like to share their knowledge, interests, needs, etc.

As the weeks progressed, we watched several letters appear in WCN (a few are reprinted on this page) from Lithuanian collectors. The editor of WCN expressed his insight for a Lithuanian Numismatic Association, and with that the editors of this paper decided to launch such an organization.

With the issuance of this first newsletter, *The Knight*, we announce the formation of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association. Your organizers feel that the small but genuine interest shown is sufficient to launch such an organization, and that as time proceeds, the "word will get out" and we will be hearing from many, many Lithuanian collectors, and also dealers who heretofore have not had any avenue to share their numismatic interests with others.

The future success of course, is up to you. If you know of any collector of Lith. money, by all means let them know about us and write.

Share your interests and knowledge with your fellow members. We'd like to keep the association on an informal basis so you don't have to be a fancy writer or advanced collector to belong. A couple of hand-written pages on a topic that interests you qualifies you to be an author.

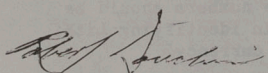
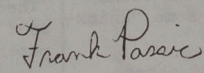
As the Republic of Lithuania is not isolated by itself, we also intend to include information about neighboring countries, i.e. Poland, Latvia, Estonia, etc., as the letters and manuscripts come in.

So its up to you, our readers. Share your knowledge and talents. Attached to this issue is a survey sheet which we'd like to have you fill out and send in. On the back side, include anything you'd like to say which you feel we have missed, and feel free to send in a manuscript.

If you know of any other collectors of Lithuanian money, photocopy the form and give them one to send in to us, also for a copy of this paper.

WE'LL BE LOOKING FOR YOUR LETTER!

Sincerely, the organizers of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association.

Robert Douchis
Member A.N.S., M.N.S.,
I.B.N.S.

Frank Passic
A.N.A. M.S.N.S.
Albion C.C.

THE KNIGHT

Published 6 times a year (we hope) by the Lithuanian Numismatic Association P.O. Box 250 Columbia, Maryland 21045.

The first issue of *The Knight* has been a "labor of love". Unfortunately, that won't pay for publishing cost, postage, etc. In this regard we request \$5 for costs for a years subscription.

LETTERS

These letters were originally published in World Coin News.

1/24/78

Dear Editor: The Jan. 10 Readers Soapbox contained a letter from Frank Passic of Albion, Mich. concerning the fact that Victor David Brenner was Lithuanian.

Mr. Passic indicated he collected Lithuanian coins and patterns. I, too, like him, am of Lithuanian ancestry and collect coins and patterns of Lithuania! This is the first time I have heard of anyone with similar collecting interests!

Robert M. Douchis, Columbia, Maryland.

2/28/78

Dear Editor: Regarding the letter by Robert Douchis and the one by Frank Passic. I also am of Lithuanian descent, and am a collector of Lithuanian, U.S., and other coins of the world. That makes three of us so far. If you check the records, you'll find more than three million people of Lithuanian descent in the country, and I would guess that about 10% of them might be coin collectors. So we are not alone. There are many of us!

Victor Dulkis, Maryland, New York

3/21/78

Dear Editor: By this point, readers Robert Douchis, Frank Passic, and Vic Dulkis shouldn't feel too lonely as the only Lithuanian coin collectors in this country, but just in case they do--yes, here I am, yet another. I have a complete set of the modern coins of that Baltic state and am working on the medieval series. Lithuanian numismatics, you are not alone!

Richard Giedroyc, Irvington, N.J.

ED. NOTE: The rallying cry for a Lithuanian Numismatic Association?

A big thank you to the editors of World Coin News, as their weekly paper was the medium of communication which led to the formation of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association and this newsletter.

We invite our readers to write to express their opinions. Our policy is to give the name, city, and state only, unless otherwise directed. Address all correspondents to the Lithuanian Numismatic Association P.O. Box 250, Columbia, Maryland 21045.

SURVEY

THE LITHUANIAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION P.O. BOX 250 COLUMBIA, MARYLAND 21045

We would appreciate it if you would take a few moments to fill out this survey sheet and mail it to us. This will help us in planning the future issues of THE KNIGHT, our official publication, and give us direction as to the future of the L.N.A. You may use the bottom and reverse of this sheet to write down comments, letters, or ideas which you might have. Your letter is important to us!

DIRECTIONS: Check the appropriate space which applies to you. Write between the lines if you must say something.

I am a ☐ DEALER ☐ COLLECTOR of ☐ U.S. ☐ FOREIGN with a particular interest in ☐ LITHUANIA ☐ LATVIA ☐ ESTONIA ☐ POLAND ☐ OTHER:

I collect or study the following: ☐ COINS ☐ NOTES ☐ MEDALS ☐ TOKENS of the ☐ MEDIEVAL ☐ MODERN eras.

I know enough ☐ LITHUANIAN ☐ GERMAN ☐ POLISH ☐ FRENCH ☐ OTHER:

to be able to ☐ CONVERSE ☐ TRANSLATE accurately and fluently. I ☐ WOULD ☐ WOULD NOT like to work on a translation project with other members. I ☐ WOULD ☐ WOULD NOT like to contribute to the newsletter. Our policy will be only to print the name, city, and state of the authors of letters, and manuscripts, unless otherwise directed.

I have some friends who are collectors and I think they would like a copy of The Knight.

Please send them a copy:

Your comments, questions, and suggestions:

(Use reverse side if needed)

